GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1771
ANSWERED ON:08.03.2016
Forest Cover
Bohara Shri Ramcharan;Kumar Shri P.;Kushawaha Shri Ravindra;Majhi Shri Balabhadra;Singh Deo Shri Kalikesh Narayan;Singh Shri Sunil Kumar;Tarai Smt. Rita

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of forest cover/area in the country as on date, State/UT-wise;
(b) whether the forest cover/area has declined in various parts of the country and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor, percentage and State-wise;
(c) whether any legal provision exists to check deforestation and large scale felling of trees and if so, the details thereof;
(d) whether the Government has involved the private sector in afforestation projects and if so, the details thereof;
(e) the funds allocated, sanctioned and utilized for protection and conservation of forests during each of the last three years and the current year, State-wise;
(f) the progress made so far in preparing comprehensive mapping of forest cover/area in the country; and
(g) the details of the steps taken to increase the forest cover during the current five year plan along with the achievements made so far in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) & (b) Forest Survey of India, Dehradun is carrying out the assessment of forest cover of the country biennially and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report. The latest report in the series is India State of Forest Report 2015. As per this report, the total forest cover of the country is 7,01,673 square kilometers which is 21.34% of the total geographical area of the country. There is a net increase of 3775 square kilometers in the forest cover of the country as compared with India State of Forest Report-2013. The detailed list showing forest cover and change in forest cover States/UTs wise is given in Annexure I. The reasons for decline in the forest cover State/UTs wise is given in Annexure II.
(c) Legal Provisions for protection of forests against illicit felling, deforestation etc, are contained in Indian Forest Act, 1927, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and Environment Protection Act, 1986 and the rules, guidelines thereof. In addition, the respective States also have their own Acts/Rules.
(d) The proposal to involve private/public sector in afforestation of degraded forest areas is under active consideration with a view to improving the forest condition and decrease import of wood and wood products.

(e) The Ministry provides Grants-in-aid to the States/ Union Territories Governments for protection and management of forests under Intensification of Forest Management Scheme (IFMS). The aim of the scheme is to supplement the efforts of the States and Union Territories towards protection and management of forests. The Funds under the scheme are utilized for purchase of vehicles for patrolling of the forests, establishment of camps, watch towers for detection and monitoring of forest fires, creation and maintenance of fire lines, survey and demarcation of forest areas and strengthening forest infrastructure etc. The details of funds released and utilized under Intensification of Forest Management Scheme (IFMS) for the last three years are given in Annexure-III.

(f) Forest Survey of India has been assessing the forest cover of country biennially since 1987. So far 14 such assessments of forest cover in the country has been carried out and the findings have been published in the State of Forest Report. Work for the 15th assessment is in progress.

(g) To increase forest cover in the country, afforestation Programme is taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as National Afforestation Programme (NAP), Green India Mission (GIM), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) which from 2015-16 has been amalgamated as the Watershed Development Component of the "Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)". National Bamboo Mission (NBM) and under Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), different State Plan/ Non- Plan Schemes including Externally Aided Projects. National Afforestation Programme (NAP) of the Ministry of Environment & Forests is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for afforestation and tree plantation and eco-restoration of degraded forests and adjoining areas in the country. Since inception of this programme an amount of Rs. 3545 crore has been invested to treat an area of 20.99 lakh hectare till 2014-15. The State-wise details of fund released under National Afforestation Programme during last three years and current year are given in Annexure IV.

Funds sanctioned under the Green India Mission (including preparatory phase) State-wise are given in Annexure-V. In Financial Year 2012-2013 and 2014-15, no funds were released to State/UT.

****